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(54) **IMAGE SENSOR WITH EMBEDDED INFRARED FILTER LAYER**

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H04N 2209/042; H04N 1/00519; H04N 5/217;
G02B 1/11
USPC 348/208.11, 268, 270, 271, 277, 278,
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See application file for complete search history.

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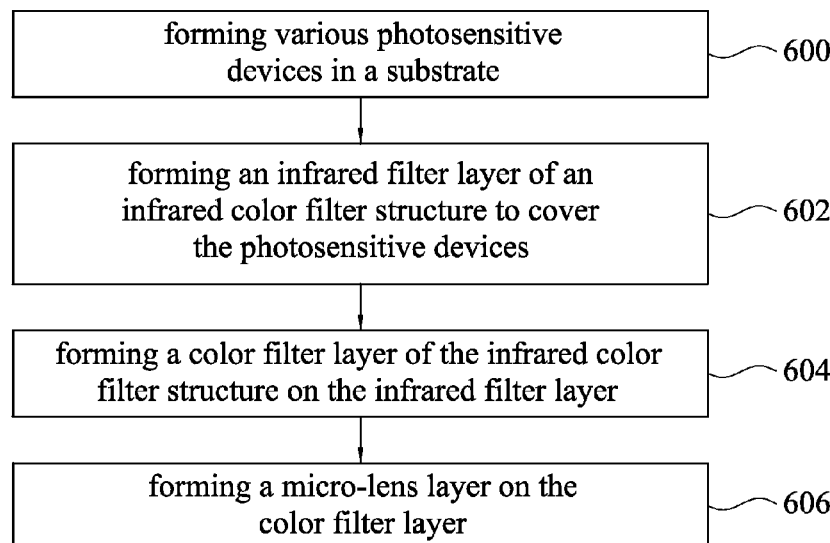
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An image sensor includes a substrate, photosensitive devices, a color filter layer, a micro-lens layer and an infrared filter layer. The photosensitive devices are disposed in the substrate. The color filter layer is disposed to cover the photosensitive devices. The micro-lens layer is disposed on the color filter layer. The infrared filter layer directly covers the micro-lens layer.

13 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



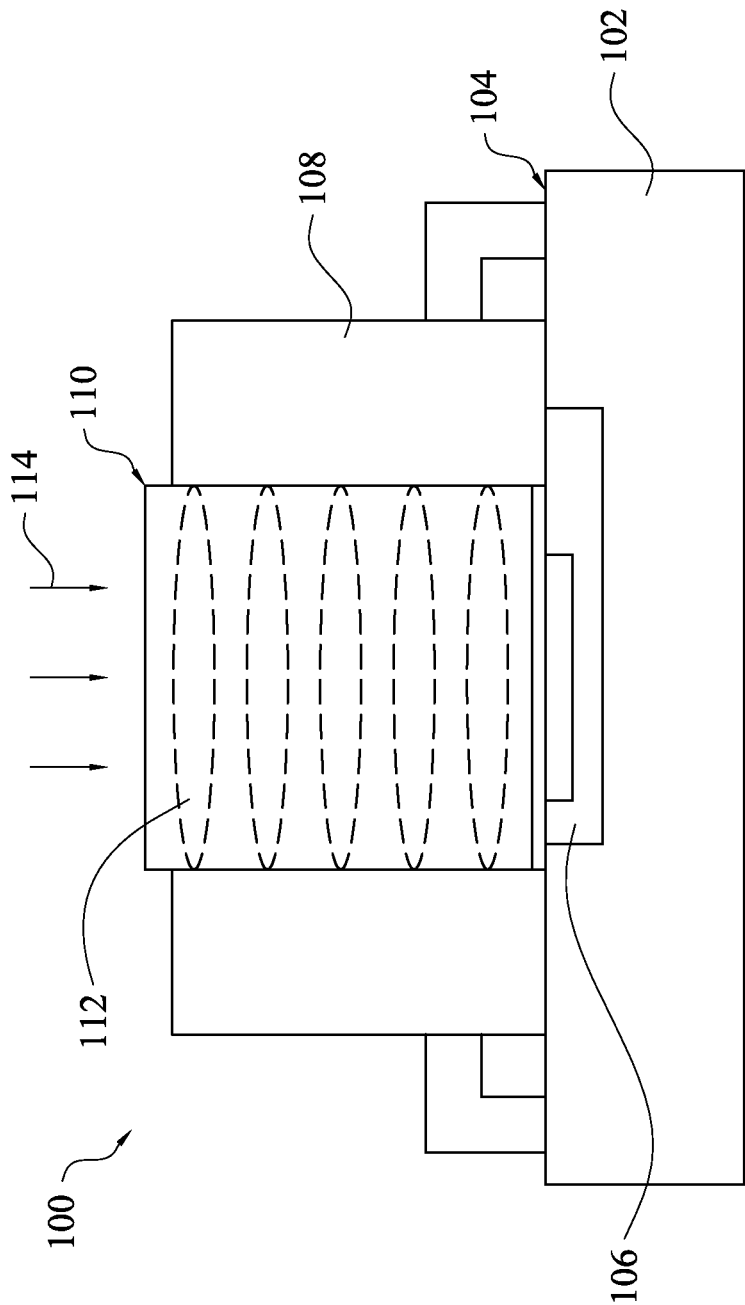


FIG. 1

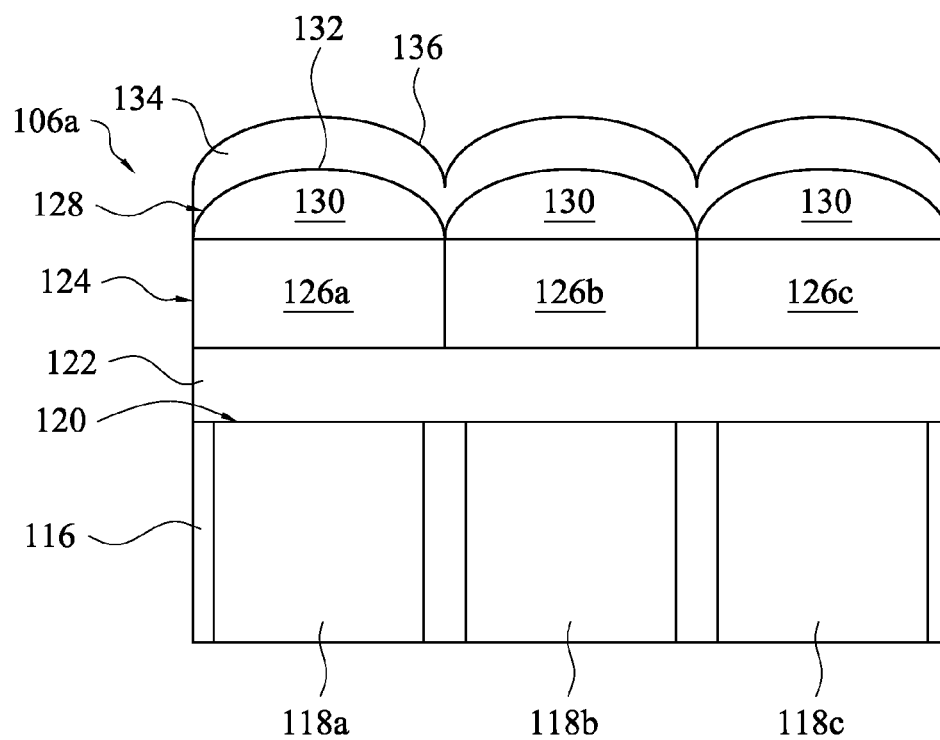


FIG. 2

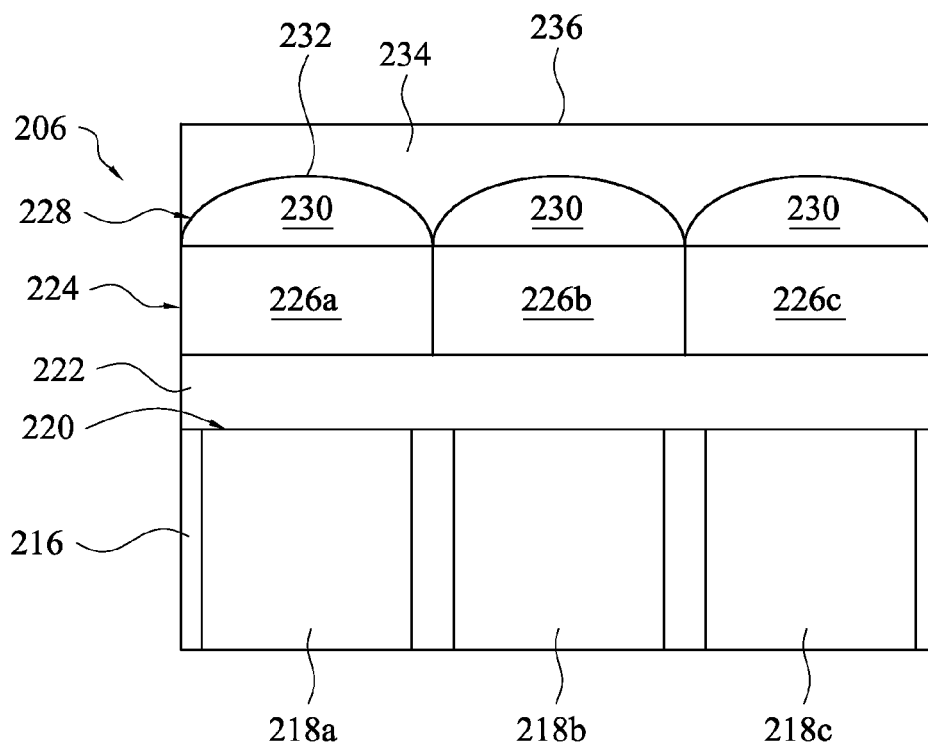


FIG. 3

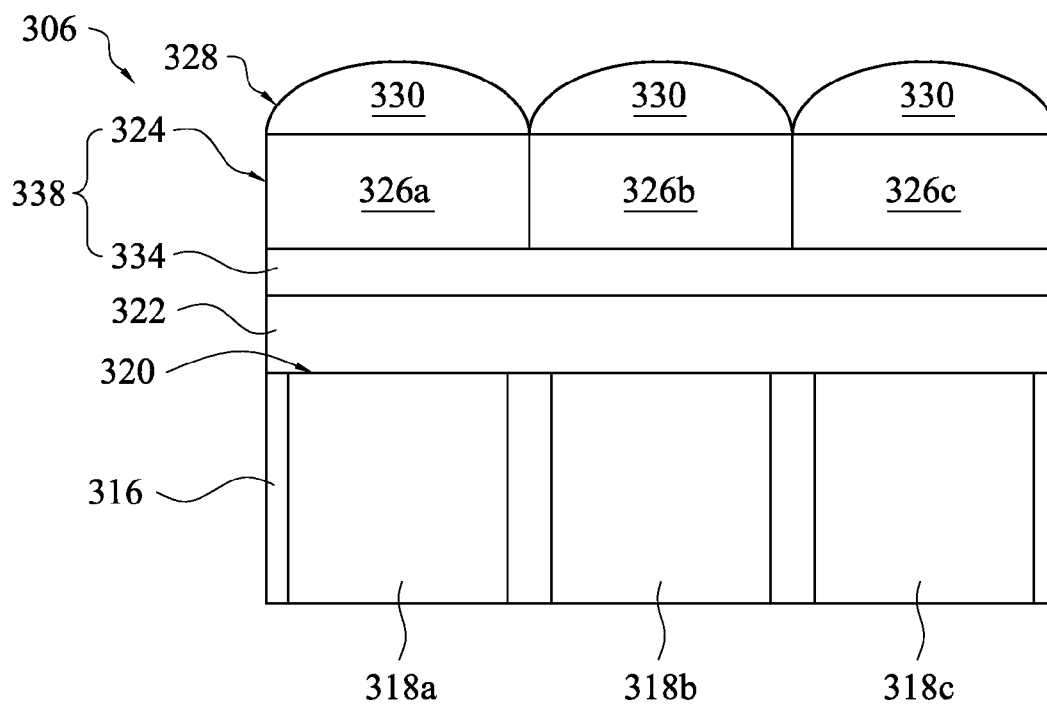


FIG. 4

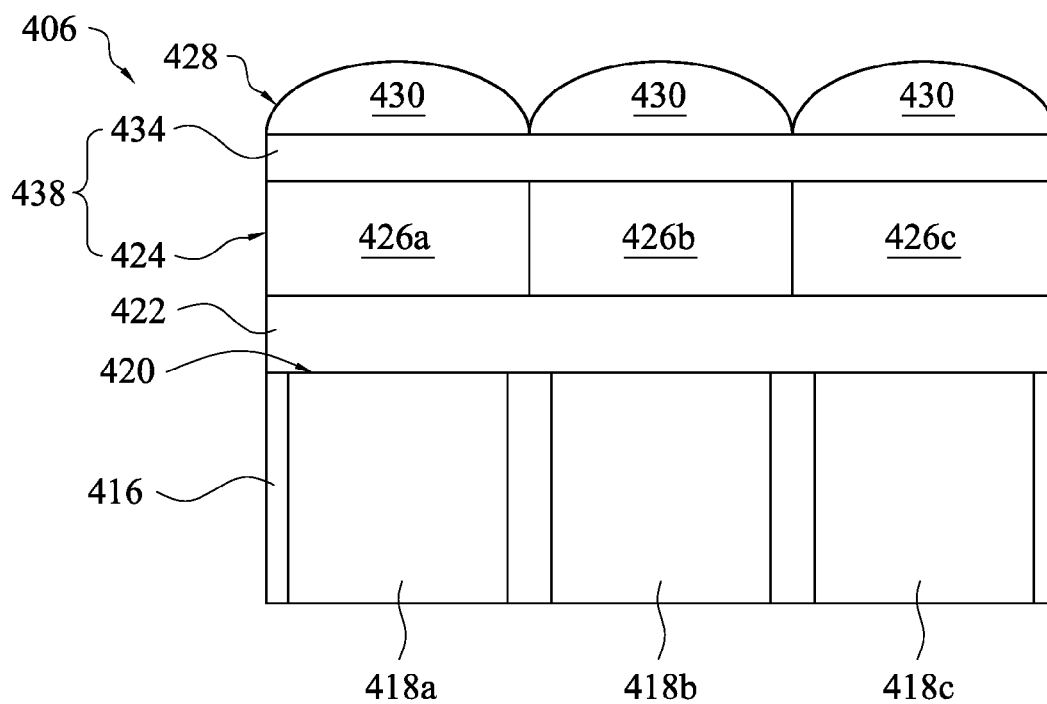


FIG. 5

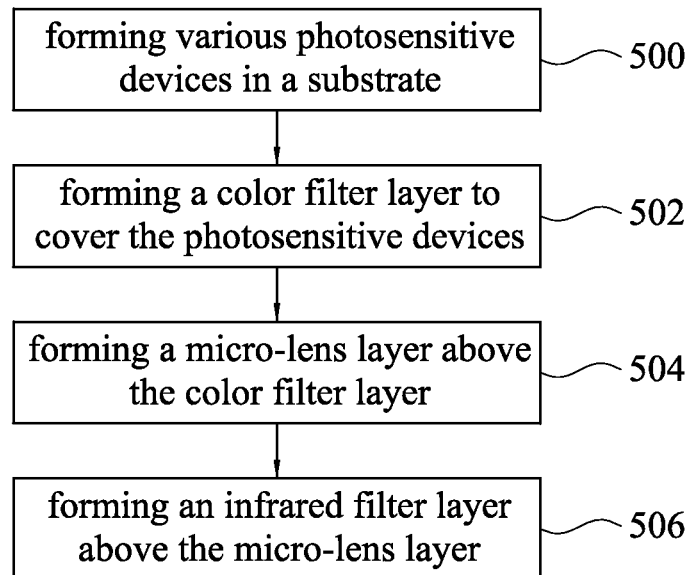


FIG. 6

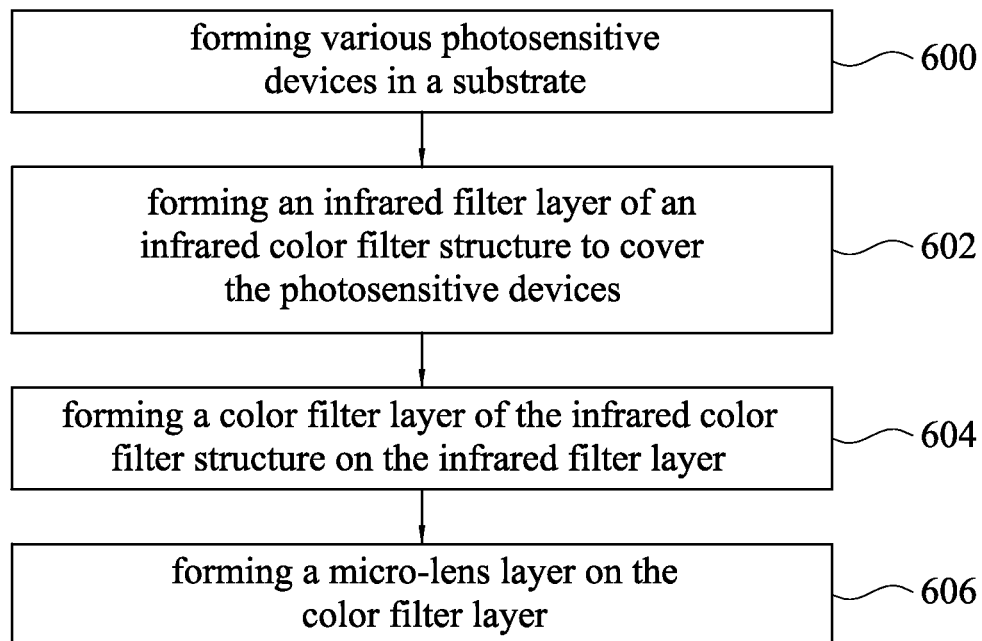


FIG. 7

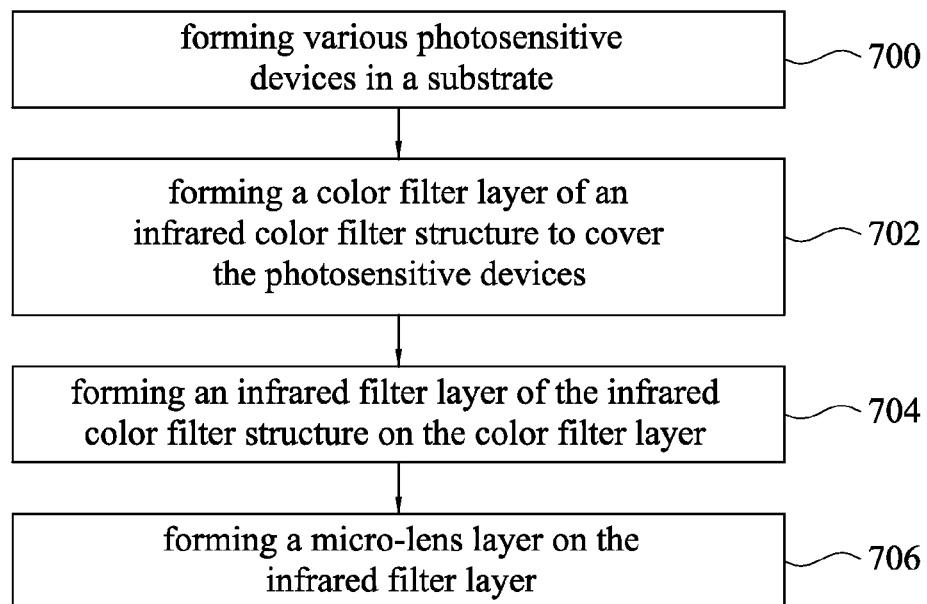


FIG. 8

IMAGE SENSOR WITH EMBEDDED INFRARED FILTER LAYER

BACKGROUND

Image sensors are usually operated to sense light. Typically, the image sensors include complementary metal-oxide-semiconductor (CMOS) image sensors (CIS) and charge-coupled device (CCD) sensors, which are widely used in various applications such as digital still camera (DSC), mobile phone camera, digital video (DV) and digital video recorder (DVR) applications. These image sensors absorb light and convert the sensed light into digital data or electrical signals.

When a trend of electronic products including image sensors, such as mobile phone cameras, is developed toward more and more compact design, camera modules of the mobile phone cameras need to be scaled down. However, as the thickness of the mobile phones keeps shrinking down, it is more difficult to produce the camera modules with a desired thickness for the compact mobile phone camera.

Accordingly, while conventional image sensors may have been generally adequate for certain purposes, they have not been entirely satisfactory in every aspect.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Aspects of the present disclosure are best understood from the following detailed description when read with the accompanying figures. It is noted that, in accordance with the standard practice in the industry, various features are not drawn to scale. In fact, the dimensions of the various features may be arbitrarily increased or reduced for clarity of discussion.

FIG. 1 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image module in accordance with some embodiments.

FIG. 2 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments.

FIG. 3 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments.

FIG. 4 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments.

FIG. 5 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments.

FIG. 6 is a flow chart of a method for manufacturing an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments.

FIG. 7 is a flow chart of a method for manufacturing an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments.

FIG. 8 is a flow chart of a method for manufacturing an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following disclosure provides many different embodiments, or examples, for implementing different features of the provided subject matter. Specific examples of components and arrangements are described below to simplify the present disclosure. These are, of course, merely examples and are not intended to be limiting. For example, the formation of a first feature over or on a second feature in the description that follows may include embodiments in which the first and second features are formed in direct contact, and may also include embodiments in which additional features may be formed between the first and second features, such that the first and second features may not be in direct contact.

Terms used herein are only used to describe the specific embodiments, which are not used to limit the claims appended herewith. For example, unless limited otherwise,

the term “one” or “the” of the single form may also represent the plural form. The terms such as “first” and “second” are used for describing various devices, areas and layers, etc., though such terms are only used for distinguishing one device, one area or one layer from another device, another area or another layer. Therefore, the first area can also be referred to as the second area without departing from the spirit of the claimed subject matter, and the others are deduced by analogy. In addition, the present disclosure may repeat reference numerals and/or letters in the various examples. This repetition is for the purpose of simplicity and clarity and does not in itself dictate a relationship between the various embodiments and/or configurations discussed. As used herein, the term “and/or” includes any and all combinations of one or more of the associated listed items.

In photography, infrared radiation needs to be screened out from incident radiation. Typically, an image module, such as a camera module, includes an image sensor and a lens module disposed over the image sensor, in which the lens module includes an infrared filter element covering the image sensor to filter out the infrared radiation from the incident radiation before the incident radiation enters the image sensor. Thus, the image sensor can only receive visible radiation and reproduce a visual-like image. However, the infrared filter element includes a glass substrate and an infrared filter layer coating on the glass substrate, and the glass substrate is too thick to thin the camera module for an advanced electronic application, such as a mobile phone camera.

Embodiments of the present disclosure are directed to providing an image sensor and a method for manufacturing the image sensor, in which the image sensor includes an embedded infrared filter layer, so that a glass substrate of an infrared filter element of a typical image module can be eliminated, and the thickness of the image module can be significantly reduced. Furthermore, because the glass substrate of the infrared filter element is eliminated, the amount of radiation entering the image sensor is increased. Accordingly, quantum efficiency of the image sensor is enhanced.

FIG. 1 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image module in accordance with some embodiments. In some embodiments, an image module **100** is a camera module, which may be operated for photographing. As shown in FIG. 1, the image module **100** includes a substrate **102**, an image sensor **106**, a holder **108** and a lens module **110**. The substrate **102** may be a circuit board, such as a printed circuit board (PCB) and a flexible printed circuit board (FPCB), so that the substrate **102** includes various circuits formed therein.

In some embodiments, the image sensor **106** is a CMOS image sensor device, which may be operated for sensing incident radiation **114**. The image sensor **106** is formed in a surface **104** of the substrate **102** and is electrically connected to the substrate **102**. The image sensor **106** is formed with an infrared filter layer which can filter out infrared radiation from the incident radiation **114**. Thus, the image module **100** can be fabricated without an additional infrared filter element disposed over the image sensor **106**.

The lens module **110** includes various lenses **112**, and the lenses **112** are typically arranged in series to condense the incident radiation **114** for a desired optical effect. The lens module **110** is held in a holder **108**, and the holder **108** with the lens module **110** is mounted onto the surface **104** of the substrate **102** and is directly disposed over the image sensor **106**. Thus, after the incident radiation **114** is condensed by the lenses **112** of the lens module **110**, the incident radiation **114** can enter the image sensor **106** and be received by the image sensor **106**, infrared radiation of the incident radiation **114** is filtered out by the infrared filter layer of the image sensor **106**,

and the image sensor **106** can convert optical signals of the incident radiation **114** with no infrared radiation into digital data or electrical signals so as to reproduce a visual-like image.

In the image module **100**, the image sensor **106** may include various types of image sensor, such as image sensors **106a**, **206**, **306** and **406** shown in FIG. 2 through FIG. 5. These image sensors **106a**, **206**, **306** and **406** are described in detail hereinafter. FIG. 2 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments. As shown in FIG. 2, in some embodiments, an image sensor **106a** includes a substrate **116**, various photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c**, a color filter layer **124**, a micro-lens layer **128** and an infrared filter layer **134**. The substrate **116** is a semiconductor substrate. The substrate **116** may be formed of a single-crystalline semiconductor material or a compound semiconductor material. For example, the substrate **116** is a silicon substrate. In some examples, carbon, germanium, gallium, arsenic, nitrogen, indium, phosphorus, and/or the like, may be included in the substrate **116**.

The image sensor **106a** may include various photosensitive devices **118a**, various photosensitive devices **118b** and various photosensitive devices **118c**. The photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c** are formed in the substrate **116**. The photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c** may be respectively used to sense different visible radiations, such as red light, green light and blue light. In certain examples, the photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c** are arranged in an array. In some examples, the photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c** are photodiodes. The photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c** can sense the radiation and convert optical signals of the radiation into electrical signals.

The color filter layer **124** is disposed over a surface **120** of the substrate **116** and covers the photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c** in the substrate **116**. In some examples, the color filter layer **124** includes various color filter portions **126a**, various color filter portions **126b** and various color filter portions **126c**, and locations of the color filter portions **126a**, **126b** and **126c** respectively correspond to those of the photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c**. Thus, the photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c** can respectively receive the radiations after the radiations are filtered by the color filter portions **126a**, **126b** and **126c**.

The micro-lens layer **128** is disposed on the color filter layer **124** and has a top surface profile **132**. In some example, the micro-lens layer **128** includes various micro-lenses **130**, and locations and areas of the micro-lenses **130** respectively correspond to those of the color filter portions **126a**, **126b** and **126c**. The incident radiations are condensed by the micro-lenses **130**, and then are converged on the color filter portions **126a**, **126b** and **126c** correspondingly. The micro-lens layer **128** is composed of the micro-lenses **130**, so that the top surface profile **132** is made up of top surfaces of the micro-lenses **130**.

The infrared filter layer **134** is disposed on the micro-lens layer **128** to directly cover the micro-lens layer **128**. The infrared filter layer **134** has a top surface profile **136**. In the present embodiment, referring to FIG. 2 again, the infrared filter layer **134** is conformally disposed on the micro-lens layer **128**, so that the top surface profile **136** of the infrared filter layer **134** is in a rounding shape. In some exemplary examples, the top surface profile **136** of the infrared filter layer **134** is substantially the same as a top surface profile of the micro-lens layer **128**, and the micro-lens layer **128** and the infrared filter layer **134** collectively form a double-lens structure.

In some examples, the infrared filter layer **134** includes an absorptive infrared filter structure for reducing the infrared reflection. The absorptive infrared filter structure may be formed from absorptive materials, such as phosphorus pentoxide (P_2O_5) and cupric oxide (CuO). In certain examples, the infrared filter layer **134** includes a reflective infrared filter structure. For example, the reflective infrared filter structure may be a multi-film stacked structure, and films of the multi-film stacked structure have different refractive indexes in an infrared region for reflecting the infrared radiation. In an exemplary example, in the reflective infrared filter structure, materials of the films are selected to make any two adjacent films have a greater refractive index difference, because the greater the refractive index difference is, the higher the reflectivity of the reflective infrared filter structure is.

In addition, a refractive index of the infrared filter layer **134** may be designed based on a refractive index of an upper layer and a refractive index of a lower layer. For example, a refractive index of the micro-lens layer **128** is equal to a square root of a product of the refractive index of the infrared filter layer **134** and a refractive index of the color filter layer **124**.

In various examples, as shown in FIG. 2, the image sensor **106a** optionally includes an anti-reflective coating (ARC) layer **122**, in which the anti-reflective coating layer **122** is disposed between the substrate **116** and the color filter layer **124**. With the anti-reflective coating layer **122**, the amount of the radiation entering the photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c** is increased.

Simultaneously referring to FIG. 1 and FIG. 2, by integrating the infrared filter layer **134** into the image sensor **106a**, an additional infrared filter element can be omitted. Thus, a glass substrate of the infrared filter element can be removed from the lens module **110** to reduce the thickness of the lens module **110**, so that the image module **100** is effectively thinned. Therefore, the image module **100** can be implemented into a thin electronic device, such as a thin mobile phone.

FIG. 3 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments. As shown in FIG. 3, in some embodiments, an image sensor **206** includes a substrate **216**, various photosensitive devices **218a**, **218b** and **218c**, a color filter layer **224**, a micro-lens layer **228** and an infrared filter layer **234**. The substrate **216** is a semiconductor substrate. The substrate **216** may be formed of a single-crystalline semiconductor material or a compound semiconductor material. For example, the substrate **216** is a silicon substrate. In some examples, carbon, germanium, gallium, arsenic, nitrogen, indium, phosphorus, and/or the like, may be included in the substrate **216**.

The image sensor **206** may include various photosensitive devices **218a**, various photosensitive devices **218b** and various photosensitive devices **218c**. The photosensitive devices **218a**, **218b** and **218c** are formed in the substrate **216**. The photosensitive devices **218a**, **218b** and **218c** may be respectively used to sense different visible radiations, such as red light, green light and blue light. The photosensitive devices **218a**, **218b** and **218c** may be arranged in an array. In some examples, the photosensitive devices **218a**, **218b** and **218c** are photodiodes. The photosensitive devices **218a**, **218b** and **218c** can sense the radiation and convert optical signals of the radiation into electrical signals.

The color filter layer **224** is disposed over a surface **220** of the substrate **216** and covers the photosensitive devices **218a**, **218b** and **218c**. In some examples, the color filter layer **224** includes various color filter portions **226a**, various color filter portions **226b** and various color filter portions **226c**, and

locations of the color filter portions **226a**, **226b** and **226c** respectively correspond to those of the photosensitive devices **218a**, **218b** and **218c**.

The micro-lens layer **228** is disposed on the color filter layer **224** and has a top surface profile **232**. In some example, the micro-lens layer **228** includes various micro-lenses **230**, and locations and areas of the micro-lenses **230** respectively correspond to those of the color filter portions **226a**, **226b** and **226c**. The incident radiations are condensed by the micro-lenses **230**, and then are converged on the color filter portions **226a**, **226b** and **226c** correspondingly. The micro-lens layer **228** is composed of the micro-lenses **230**, so that the top surface profile **232** is made up of top surfaces of the micro-lenses **230**, and the top surface profile **232** is in a rounding shape.

The infrared filter layer **234** is disposed on the micro-lens layer **228** to directly cover the micro-lens layer **228**. In the present embodiment, referring to FIG. 3 again, the infrared filter layer **234** has a top surface profile **236**, and the top surface profile **236** is flat. Accordingly, the infrared filter layer **234** can be fabricated easily. In some examples, the infrared filter layer **234** includes an absorptive infrared filter structure for reducing the infrared reflection. The absorptive infrared filter structure may be formed from absorptive materials, such as phosphorus pentoxide and cupric oxide. In certain examples, the infrared filter layer **234** includes a reflective infrared filter structure. For example, the reflective infrared filter structure may be a multi-film stacked structure, and films of the multi-film stacked structure have different refractive indexes in an infrared region for reflecting the infrared radiation. In an exemplary example, in the reflective infrared filter structure, materials of the films are selected to make any two adjacent films have a greater refractive index difference, because the greater the refractive index difference is, the higher the reflectivity of the reflective infrared filter structure is.

In addition, a refractive index of the infrared filter layer **234** may be designed based on a refractive index of an upper layer and a refractive index of a lower layer. For example, a refractive index of the micro-lens layer **228** is equal to a square root of a product of the refractive index of the infrared filter layer **234** and a refractive index of the color filter layer **224**.

In various examples, as shown in FIG. 3, the image sensor **206** optionally includes an anti-reflective coating layer **222**, in which the anti-reflective coating layer **222** is disposed between the substrate **216** and the color filter layer **224**. With the anti-reflective coating layer **222**, the amount of the radiation entering the photosensitive devices **218a**, **218b** and **218c** is increased.

Simultaneously referring to FIG. 1 and FIG. 3, by integrating the infrared filter layer **234** into the image sensor **206**, an additional infrared filter element can be omitted. Thus, a glass substrate of the infrared filter element can be removed from the lens module **110** to reduce the thickness of the lens module **110**, thereby effectively thinning the image module **100**.

FIG. 4 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments. As shown in FIG. 4, in some embodiments, an image sensor **306** includes a substrate **316**, various photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c**, an infrared color filter structure **338** and a micro-lens layer **328**. The substrate **316** is a semiconductor substrate. The substrate **316** may be formed of a single-crystalline semiconductor material or a compound semiconductor material. For example, the substrate **316** is a silicon substrate. In some examples, carbon, germanium, gallium, arsenic, nitrogen, indium, phosphorus, and/or the like, may be included in the substrate **316**.

The image sensor **306** may include various photosensitive devices **318a**, various photosensitive devices **318b** and various photosensitive devices **318c**. The photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** are formed in the substrate **316**. The photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** may be respectively used to sense different visible radiations, such as red light, green light and blue light. The photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** may be arranged in an array. In some examples, the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** are photodiodes. The photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** can sense the radiation and convert optical signals of the radiation into electrical signals.

The infrared color filter structure **338** is disposed over a surface **320** of the substrate **316** and covers the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c**. In some examples, as shown in FIG. 4, the infrared color filter structure **338** includes an infrared filter layer **334** and a color filter layer **324**. The infrared filter layer **334** is disposed over the surface **320** of the substrate **316**, and the color filter layer **324** is disposed on the infrared filter layer **334**. In some examples, the infrared filter layer **334** includes an absorptive infrared filter structure for reducing the infrared reflection. The absorptive infrared filter structure may be formed from absorptive materials, such as phosphorus pentoxide and cupric oxide. In certain examples, the infrared filter layer **334** includes a reflective infrared filter structure. For example, the reflective infrared filter structure may be a multi-film stacked structure, and films of the multi-film stacked structure have different refractive indexes in an infrared region for reflecting the infrared radiation. In an exemplary example, in the reflective infrared filter structure, materials of the films are selected to make any two adjacent films have a greater refractive index difference, because the greater the refractive index difference is, the higher the reflectivity of the reflective infrared filter structure is.

In addition, a refractive index of the infrared filter layer **334** may be designed based on a refractive index of an upper layer and a refractive index of a lower layer. For example, a refractive index of the color filter layer **324** is equal to a square root of a product of the refractive index of the infrared filter layer **334** and a refractive index of the micro-lens layer **328** which is disposed on the color filter layer **324** of the infrared color filter structure **338**.

In some examples, the color filter layer **324** includes various color filter portions **326a**, various color filter portions **326b** and various color filter portions **326c**, and locations of the color filter portions **326a**, **326b** and **326c** respectively correspond to those of the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c**.

The micro-lens layer **328** is disposed on the color filter layer **324** of the infrared color filter structure **338**. In some example, the micro-lens layer **328** includes various micro-lenses **330**, and locations and areas of the micro-lenses **330** respectively correspond to those of the color filter portions **326a**, **326b** and **326c**. The incident radiations are condensed by the micro-lenses **330**, and then are converged on the color filter portions **326a**, **326b** and **326c** correspondingly.

In various examples, as shown in FIG. 4, the image sensor **306** optionally includes an anti-reflective coating layer **322**, in which the anti-reflective coating layer **322** is disposed between the substrate **316** and the infrared filter layer **334** of the infrared color filter structure **338**. With the anti-reflective coating layer **322**, the amount of the radiation entering the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** is increased.

Simultaneously referring to FIG. 1 and FIG. 4, by integrating the infrared filter layer **334** into the image sensor **306**, an additional infrared filter element is not needed. Thus, a glass substrate of the infrared filter element can be removed from

the lens module 110 to reduce the thickness of the lens module 110, thereby effectively thinning the image module 100.

FIG. 5 is a schematic cross-sectional view of an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments. As shown in FIG. 5, in some embodiments, an image sensor 406 includes a substrate 416, various photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c, an infrared color filter structure 438 and a micro-lens layer 428. The substrate 416 is a semiconductor substrate. The substrate 416 may be formed of a single-crystalline semiconductor material or a compound semiconductor material. For example, the substrate 416 is a silicon substrate. In some examples, carbon, germanium, gallium, arsenic, nitrogen, indium, phosphorus, and/or the like, may be included in the substrate 416.

The image sensor 406 may include various photosensitive devices 418a, various photosensitive devices 418b and various photosensitive devices 418c. The photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c are formed in the substrate 416. The photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c may be respectively used to sense different visible radiations, such as red light, green light and blue light. The photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c may be arranged in an array. In some examples, the photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c are photodiodes. The photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c can sense the radiation and convert optical signals of the radiation into electrical signals.

The infrared color filter structure 438 is disposed over a surface 420 of the substrate 416 and covers the photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c. In some examples, as shown in FIG. 5, the infrared color filter structure 438 includes a color filter layer 424 and an infrared filter layer 434. The color filter layer 424 is disposed over the surface 420 of the substrate 416, and the infrared filter layer 434 is disposed on the color filter layer 424. In some examples, the color filter layer 424 includes various color filter portions 426a, various color filter portions 426b and various color filter portions 426c, and locations of the color filter portions 426a, 426b and 426c respectively correspond to those of the photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c.

In some examples, the infrared filter layer 434 includes an absorptive infrared filter structure for reducing the infrared reflection. The absorptive infrared filter structure may be formed from absorptive materials, such as phosphorus pentoxide and cupric oxide. In certain examples, the infrared filter layer 434 includes a reflective infrared filter structure. For example, the reflective infrared filter structure may be a multi-film stacked structure, and films of the multi-film stacked structure have different refractive indexes in an infrared region for reflecting the infrared radiation. In an exemplary example, in the reflective infrared filter structure, materials of the films are selected to make any two adjacent films have a greater refractive index difference, because the greater the refractive index difference is, the higher the reflectivity of the reflective infrared filter structure is.

In addition, a refractive index of the infrared filter layer 434 may be designed based on a refractive index of an upper layer and a refractive index of a lower layer. For example, a refractive index of the infrared filter layer 434 is equal to a square root of a product of the refractive index of the color filter layer 424 and a refractive index of the micro-lens layer 430 which is disposed on the infrared filter layer 434 of the infrared color filter structure 438.

The micro-lens layer 428 is disposed on the infrared filter layer 434 of the infrared color filter structure 438. In some example, the micro-lens layer 428 includes various micro-lenses 430, and locations and areas of the micro-lenses 430 respectively correspond to those of the color filter portions

426a, 426b and 426c. The incident radiations are condensed by the micro-lenses 430 and next converged on the infrared filter layer 434, and then enter the color filter portions 426a, 426b and 426c correspondingly.

In various examples, as shown in FIG. 5, the image sensor 406 optionally includes an anti-reflective coating layer 422, in which the anti-reflective coating layer 422 is disposed between the substrate 416 and the color filter layer 424 of the infrared color filter structure 438. With the anti-reflective coating layer 422, the amount of the radiation entering the photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c is increased.

Simultaneously referring to FIG. 1 and FIG. 5, by integrating the infrared filter layer 434 into the image sensor 406, no infrared filter element is needed. Thus, a glass substrate of the infrared filter element can be removed from the lens module 110 to reduce the thickness of the lens module 110, thereby effectively thinning the image module 100.

Referring to FIG. 2 and FIG. 6, FIG. 6 is a flow chart of a method for manufacturing an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments. The method begins at operation 500, where various photosensitive devices 118a, 118b and 118c are formed in a substrate 116. The substrate 116 may be formed of a single-crystalline semiconductor material or a compound semiconductor material. For example, silicon, carbon, germanium, gallium, arsenic, nitrogen, indium, phosphorus, and/or the like, may be included in the substrate 116. In some examples, the photosensitive devices 118a, 118b and 118c may be respectively used to sense different visible radiations, such as red light, green light and blue light, and the photosensitive devices 118a, 118b and 118c may be arranged in an array. In certain examples, the photosensitive devices 118a, 118b and 118c are photodiodes.

At operation 502, a color filter layer 124 is formed over a surface 120 of the substrate 116 and to cover the photosensitive devices 118a, 118b and 118c using a coating process, for example. In some examples, the operation of forming the color filter layer 124 is performed to form the color filter layer 124 including various color filter portions 126a, various color filter portions 126b and various color filter portions 126c, in which locations of the color filter portions 126a, 126b and 126c respectively correspond to those of the photosensitive devices 118a, 118b and 118c.

At operation 504, a micro-lens layer 128 is formed above the color filter layer 124. In some examples, the operation of forming the micro-lens layer 128 is performed to form the micro-lens layer 128 including various micro-lenses 130, in which locations and areas of the micro-lenses 130 respectively correspond to those of the color filter portions 126a, 126b and 126c. The micro-lens layer 128 is formed to have a top surface profile 132. The micro-lens layer 128 is composed of the micro-lenses 130, so that the top surface profile 132 is made up of top surfaces of the micro-lenses 130, and the top surface profile 132 is in a rounding shape.

At operation 506, an infrared filter layer 134 is formed above the micro-lens layer 128, i.e. the infrared filter layer 134 is formed to be adjacent to the micro-lens layer 128. In certain examples, the operation of forming the infrared filter layer 134 is performed to form the infrared filter layer 134 directly covering the micro-lens layer 128. The infrared filter layer 134 is formed to have a top surface profile 136. In the present embodiments, referring to FIG. 2 again, the infrared filter layer 134 is conformally formed on the micro-lens layer 128, so that the top surface profile 136 of the infrared filter layer 134 is formed to be in a rounding shape. In some exemplary examples, the top surface profile 136 of the infrared filter layer 134 is formed to be substantially the same as a top surface profile of the micro-lens layer 128.

In the present embodiments, the top surface profile **136** of the infrared filter layer **134** is formed to be in a rounding shape. In various embodiments, as shown in FIG. 3, an top surface profile **236** of an infrared filter layer **234** is formed to be flat, so that the infrared filter layer **234** can be fabricated easily.

In some examples, the infrared filter layer **134** is formed to include an absorptive infrared filter structure for reducing the infrared reflection. The absorptive infrared filter structure may be formed from absorptive materials, such as phosphorus pentoxide and cupric oxide. In certain examples, the infrared filter layer **134** is formed to include a reflective infrared filter structure. For example, the reflective infrared filter structure may be formed to include a multi-film stacked structure, in which films of the multi-film stacked structure have different refractive indexes in an infrared region for reflecting the infrared radiation. Furthermore, in the operation of forming the infrared filter layer **134**, a refractive index of the infrared filter layer **134** may be designed based on a refractive index of an upper layer and a refractive index of a lower layer. For example, a refractive index of the micro-lens layer **128** is equal to a square root of a product of the refractive index of the infrared filter layer **134** and a refractive index of the color filter layer **124**.

In various examples, as shown in FIG. 2, before the operation of forming the color filter layer **124**, an anti-reflective coating layer **122** is optionally formed on the surface **120** of the substrate **116** and to cover the photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c**. With formation of the anti-reflective coating layer **122**, the amount of the radiation entering the photosensitive devices **118a**, **118b** and **118c** is increased.

Referring to FIG. 4 and FIG. 7, FIG. 7 is a flow chart of a method for manufacturing an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments. The method begins at operation **600**, where various photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** are formed in a substrate **316**. The substrate **316** may be formed of a single-crystalline semiconductor material or a compound semiconductor material. For example, silicon, carbon, germanium, gallium, arsenic, nitrogen, indium, phosphorus, and/or the like, may be included in the substrate **316**. In some examples, the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** may be respectively used to sense different visible radiations, such as red light, green light and blue light, and the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** may be arranged in an array. In certain examples, the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** are photodiodes.

Next, an infrared color filter structure **338** is formed over a surface **320** of the substrate **316**. In some examples, as shown in FIG. 4, the infrared color filter structure **338** is formed to include an infrared filter layer **334** and a color filter layer **324**. At operation **602**, the infrared filter layer **334** of the infrared color filter structure **338** is formed to cover the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** using a coating process, for example. In some examples, the infrared filter layer **334** is formed to include an absorptive infrared filter structure for reducing the infrared reflection. The absorptive infrared filter structure may be formed from absorptive materials, such as phosphorus pentoxide and cupric oxide. In certain examples, the infrared filter layer **334** is formed to include a reflective infrared filter structure. For example, the reflective infrared filter structure may be formed to include a multi-film stacked structure, in which films of the multi-film stacked structure have different refractive indexes in an infrared region for reflecting the infrared.

At operation **604**, the color filter layer **324** of the infrared color filter structure **338** is formed on the infrared filter layer **334** using, for example, a coating process, i.e. the infrared

filter layer **334** is formed to be adjacent to the color filter layer **324** and under the color filter layer **324**. In some examples, the operation of forming the color filter layer **324** is performed to form the color filter layer **324** including various color filter portions **326a**, various color filter portions **326b** and various color filter portions **326c**, in which locations of the color filter portions **326a**, **326b** and **326c** respectively correspond to those of the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c**.

At operation **606**, a micro-lens layer **328** is formed above the color filter layer **324**. In some example, the operation of forming the micro-lens layer **328** is performed to form the micro-lens layer **328** including various micro-lenses **330**, in which locations and areas of the micro-lenses **330** respectively correspond to those of the color filter portions **326a**, **326b** and **326c**.

In the operation of forming the infrared filter layer **334**, a refractive index of the infrared filter layer **334** may be designed based on a refractive index of an upper layer and a refractive index of a lower layer. For example, as shown in FIG. 4, a refractive index of the color filter layer **324** is equal to a square root of a product of the refractive index of the infrared filter layer **334** and a refractive index of the micro-lens layer **330**.

Referring to FIG. 4 again, in various examples, before the operation of forming the infrared filter layer **334**, an anti-reflective coating layer **322** is optionally formed on the surface **320** of the substrate **316** and to cover the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c**. With formation of the anti-reflective coating layer **322**, the amount of the radiation entering the photosensitive devices **318a**, **318b** and **318c** is increased.

Referring to FIG. 5 and FIG. 8, FIG. 8 is a flow chart of a method for manufacturing an image sensor in accordance with some embodiments. The method begins at operation **700**, where various photosensitive devices **418a**, **418b** and **418c** are formed in a substrate **416**. The substrate **416** may be formed of a single-crystalline semiconductor material or a compound semiconductor material. For example, silicon, carbon, germanium, gallium, arsenic, nitrogen, indium, phosphorus, and/or the like, may be included in the substrate **416**. In some examples, the photosensitive devices **418a**, **418b** and **418c** may be respectively used to sense different visible radiations, such as red light, green light and blue light, and the photosensitive devices **418a**, **418b** and **418c** may be arranged in an array. In certain examples, the photosensitive devices **418a**, **418b** and **418c** are photodiodes.

Next, an infrared color filter structure **438** is formed over a surface **420** of the substrate **416**. In some examples, as shown in FIG. 5, the infrared color filter structure **438** is formed to include a color filter layer **424** and an infrared filter layer **434**. At operation **702**, the color filter layer **424** of the infrared color filter structure **438** is formed to cover the photosensitive devices **418a**, **418b** and **418c** using a coating process, for example. In some examples, the operation of forming the color filter layer **424** is performed to form the color filter layer **424** including various color filter portions **426a**, various color filter portions **426b** and various color filter portions **426c**, in which locations of the color filter portions **426a**, **426b** and **426c** respectively correspond to those of the photosensitive devices **418a**, **418b** and **418c**.

At operation **704**, the infrared filter layer **434** of the infrared color filter structure **438** is formed on the color filter layer **424** using, for example, a coating process, i.e. the infrared filter layer **434** is formed to be adjacent to the color filter layer **424**. In some examples, the infrared filter layer **434** is formed to include an absorptive infrared filter structure for reducing the infrared reflection. The absorptive infrared filter structure

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may be formed from absorptive materials, such as phosphorus pentoxide and cupric oxide. In certain examples, the infrared filter layer 434 is formed to include a reflective infrared filter structure. For example, the reflective infrared filter structure may be formed to include a multi-film stacked structure, in which films of the multi-film stacked structure have different refractive indexes in an infrared region for reflecting the infrared.

At operation 706, a micro-lens layer 428 is formed above the infrared filter layer 434, i.e. the infrared filter layer 434 is formed to be further adjacent to the micro-lens layer 428 in addition to the color filter layer 424. In some example, the operation of forming the micro-lens layer 428 is performed to form the micro-lens layer 428 including various micro-lenses 430, in which locations and areas of the micro-lenses 430 respectively correspond to those of the color filter portions 426a, 426b and 426c.

In the operation of forming the infrared filter layer 434, a refractive index of the infrared filter layer 434 may be designed based on a refractive index of an upper layer and a refractive index of a lower layer. For example, as shown in FIG. 5, a refractive index of the infrared filter layer 434 is equal to a square root of a product of the refractive index of the color filter layer 424 and a refractive index of the micro-lens layer 430.

Referring to FIG. 5 again, in various examples, before the operation of forming the color filter layer 424, an anti-reflective coating layer 422 is optionally formed on the surface 420 of the substrate 416 and to cover the photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c. With formation of the anti-reflective coating layer 422, the amount of the radiation entering the photosensitive devices 418a, 418b and 418c is increased.

In accordance with an embodiment, the present disclosure discloses an image sensor. The image sensor includes a substrate, photosensitive devices, a color filter layer, a micro-lens layer and an infrared filter layer. The photosensitive devices are disposed in the substrate. The color filter layer is disposed to cover the photosensitive devices. The micro-lens layer is disposed on the color filter layer. The infrared filter layer directly covers the micro-lens layer.

In accordance with another embodiment, the present disclosure discloses an image sensor. The image sensor includes a substrate, photosensitive devices, an infrared color filter structure and a micro-lens layer. The photosensitive devices are disposed in the substrate. The infrared color filter structure is disposed to cover the photosensitive devices. The micro-lens layer is disposed on the infrared color filter structure.

In accordance with yet another embodiment, the present disclosure discloses a method for manufacturing an image sensor. In this method, various photosensitive devices are formed in a substrate. A color filter layer is formed to cover the photosensitive devices. A micro-lens layer is formed above the color filter layer. An infrared filter layer is formed above the substrate and adjacent to the color filter layer and/or the micro-lens layer.

The foregoing outlines features of several embodiments so that those skilled in the art may better understand the aspects of the present disclosure. Those skilled in the art should appreciate that they may readily use the present disclosure as a basis for designing or modifying other processes and structures for carrying out the same purposes and/or achieving the same advantages of the embodiments introduced herein. Those skilled in the art should also realize that such equivalent

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constructions do not depart from the spirit and scope of the present disclosure, and that they may make various changes, substitutions, and alterations herein without departing from the spirit and scope of the present disclosure.

What is claimed is:

1. An image sensor, comprising:

a substrate;

a plurality of photosensitive devices disposed in the substrate;

an infrared color filter structure disposed to cover the photosensitive devices, wherein the infrared color filter structure comprises an infrared filter layer disposed over the substrate and a color filter layer disposed on the infrared filter layer; and

a micro-lens layer disposed on the infrared color filter structure, wherein a refractive index of the color filter layer is equal to a square root of a product of a refractive index of the infrared filter layer and a refractive index of the micro-lens layer.

2. The image sensor of claim 1, further comprising an anti-reflective coating layer disposed between the substrate and the infrared color filter structure.

3. The image sensor of claim 1, wherein the infrared filter layer comprises a reflective infrared filter structure.

4. The image sensor of claim 3, wherein the reflective infrared filter structure is a multi-film stacked structure.

5. The image sensor of claim 4, wherein the multi-film stacked structure comprises a plurality of films, and the films of the multi-film stacked structure have different refractive indexes in an infrared region.

6. The image sensor of claim 1, wherein the substrate is formed from silicon, carbon, germanium, gallium, arsenic, nitrogen, indium or phosphorus.

7. A method for manufacturing an image sensor, the method comprising:

forming a plurality of photosensitive devices in a substrate; forming a color filter layer to cover the photosensitive devices;

forming a micro-lens layer above the color filter layer; and forming an infrared filter layer above the substrate and adjacent to the color filter layer and/or the micro-lens layer, wherein the color filter layer is formed to have a refractive index which is equal to a square root of a product of a refractive index of the infrared filter layer and a refractive index of the micro-lens layer.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein forming the infrared filter layer is performed to form the infrared filter layer under the color filter layer.

9. The method of claim 7, further comprising forming an anti-reflective coating layer on the substrate before forming the color filter layer to form the anti-reflective coating layer between the substrate and the color filter layer.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein the infrared filter layer is formed to comprise a reflective infrared filter structure.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the reflective infrared filter structure is formed to be a multi-film stacked structure.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the multi-film stacked structure is formed to comprise a plurality of films, and the films of the multi-film stacked structure have different refractive indexes in an infrared region.

13. The method of claim 7, wherein the color filter layer is formed by using a coating process.

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